

# The Australian National Flag

## Symbols

The Australian National Flag has three elements on a blue background: the Union Flag, the Commonwealth Star and the Southern Cross.



## The Union Flag

The Union Flag represents Australia's history of British settlement. The Union Flag consists of the three crosses of St George, St Andrew and St Patrick, and signifies the principles and ideals on which Australia was founded.

## The Commonwealth Star

The large seven pointed white star is also referred to as the Federation Star. It commemorates the union of the separate Australian colonies on 1<sup>st</sup> January, 1901. There is 1 point to represent each of the 6 states of Australia, and the 7<sup>th</sup> point represents the Federal Territories of Australia.

## The Southern Cross

The Southern Cross is a constellation which can only be seen in the Southern Hemisphere. It represents Australia's geographical location, and has been a symbol of importance to both European explorers and settlers and to the indigenous people of Australia.

## History

Following the Federation of Australia on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1901, Prime Minister Sir Edmund Barton announced an international competition to design a new flag for the new nation.

The competition attracted 32,823 entries. Five nearly identical entries were awarded first prize, with their designers sharing the £200 prize money. The flag was first publically displayed on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1901.



## Use

The Australian National Flag can be flown on any day of the year. It is flown together with the Aboriginal flag and the Torres Strait Islander flag. It is an important symbol in a range of national celebrations such as Anzac Day, Australia Day and NAIDOC Week, and is used to represent Australia as a nation at international events.